

# CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fourth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

CONDUCTED BY R. CHAMBERS (SECUNDUS)

No. 1040.—Vol. XX. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1883.

PRICE 1½d.

## HOUSES WITH SECRET CHAMBERS.

APART from the romance and legendary lore associated with many of our old country-houses, one of their most interesting features is the secret chamber, which is not only curious as a relic of architectural ingenuity, but has been in most cases so skilfully contrived as to escape detection from even the most experienced eye. Few persons, too, perhaps are aware how numerous these hiding-places were in days gone by; and indeed, it would seem that the mansions of our leading families were not considered complete without them. It is easy to understand how necessary such contrivances were regarded, when we call to mind the widespread and deep-rooted feeling of insecurity which once prevailed throughout the country, engendered by religious and political intolerance. It must not be forgotten, also, that in the sixteenth century, and early in the seventeenth, the celebration of mass in this country was forbidden; and hence those families that persisted in adhering to the Roman Catholic faith oftentimes kept a priest, who celebrated it in a room, opening whence was a hiding-place, to which, in case of emergency, he could retreat. It is recorded, for instance, how a priest of the name of Genings was hanged on the 10th of December 1591, before the door of a house in Gray's Inn Fields, for having said mass in a chamber of the said house on the previous 8th of November.

These hiding-places, too, were used for other purposes; often affording a welcome shelter to political refugees, besides in various other ways furthering the designs of those who abetted, and connived at, deeds that would not bear the light. Southey in his *Commonplace Book*, for example, records the following anecdote, which is a good illustration of the bad uses to which these secret chambers were probably often put: 'At Bishop's Middleham, a man died with the reputation of a water-drinker; and it was discovered that he had killed himself by secret drunkenness. There was a Roman Catholic hiding-place in the house,

the entrance to which was from his bedroom; he converted it into a cellar, and the quantity of brandy which he had consumed was ascertained.' In truth, as it has been often pointed out, it is impossible to say to what ends these hiding-places were occasionally devoted; and there is little doubt but that they were the scenes of some of those thrilling stories upon which many of our local traditions have been founded. The subject, however, is an extensive one, so that in the present paper we can only give an outline of some of the principal instances.

In Clarke's *History of Ipswich* (1830) there is an interesting account of Sparrow's House, built in the year 1567, in which the following facts are stated: 'There is an apartment in the roof of the back-part of the house, the entrance to which was ingeniously hidden by a sliding panel. It has only one small window, and that cannot be seen from any other part of the premises. It had been fitted up as a private chapel or oratory; and there is a tradition that Charles II. was secreted in this room some time after the battle of Worcester.' At Melford Hall, too, in Suffolk, there is a curious hiding-place in the thickness of the walls and chimney, approached only through a trap panel. Referring, however, to the concealment of Charles II., we must not omit to mention Boscobel House, which afforded him such a safe retreat. This old building has two actual hiding-places, and there are indications which point to the former existence of a third. The secret place, we are told by a correspondent of *Notes and Queries*, in which the king was hidden is situated in the Squire's bedroom. There was formerly a sliding panel in the wainscot, near the fireplace, which, when opened, gave access to a closet, the false floor of which still admits of a person taking up his position in this secret nook. In days gone by, it had a communication with the garden; but this is now blocked up. The wainscoting, too, which concealed the movable panel in the bedroom was originally covered with tapestry, with which the room was hung. The other chamber is at the

top of the house, in a kind of loft, access to which is through a trap-door, wherein, tradition says, recusants and priests were occasionally secreted.

Again, an important instance of these secret chambers is that existing at Ingatestone Hall, in Essex, which, it may be remembered, was in years gone by a summer residence belonging to the abbey of Barking. It came with the estate into possession of the family of Petre in the reign of Henry VIII., and continued to be occupied as their family seat until the latter half of the last century. The hiding-place, which is fourteen feet long, two feet broad, and ten feet high, was discovered in the south-east corner of a small room attached to what was probably the host's bedroom. Underneath the floor-boards, a hole or trap-door about two feet square was found, with a twelve-step ladder to descend into the room below, the floor of which was composed of nine inches of dry sand. This, on being examined, brought to light a few bones, which, it has been suggested, are the remains of food supplied to some unfortunate occupant during confinement. The existence of this retreat, it is said, must have been familiar to the heads of the family for several generations; evidence of this circumstance being afforded by a packing-case which was found in the secret chamber, and upon which was the following direction: 'For the Right Honble the Lady Petre, at Ingatestone Hall, in Essex.' The wood, also, was in a decayed state, and the writing in an antiquated style, which is only what might be expected, considering that the Petre family left Ingatestone Hall between the years 1770 and 1780.

Then there is Hendlip House, situated about four miles from Worcester, which was long famous for the ingenuity with which its secret hiding-places had been contrived. It is said to have been built in the reign of Queen Elizabeth by John Abingdon, the queen's cofferer, a zealous partisan of Mary Queen of Scots. It is believed, says a writer in the *Beauties of England*, that the person who designed the arrangements of this mansion was Thomas Abingdon, the son of the builder. Hence the result of his labours was that there was scarcely a room for which there was not provided a secret way of going in and out. Some, for instance, we are informed, had places of retreat in their chimneys; others had staircases concealed in the walls; and in short there was not a nook or corner that was not turned to some advantage. The house, too, as a contributor to the *Book of Days* has observed, owing to its elevated position, was highly valuable for the purposes for which it was designed, since 'it afforded the means of keeping a watchful lookout for the approach of the emissaries of the law, or of persons by whom it might have been dangerous for any skulking priest to be seen, supposing his reverence to have gone forth for an hour to take the air.' In an historical point of view, its memory will always be preserved, because it was here that Father Garnet was concealed for several weeks in the winter of 1605-6, but who eventually paid the penalty of his guilty knowledge of the Gunpowder Plot.

Among other houses of this kind in the neighbourhood of Worcester may be mentioned Harrington Hall, near Chaddesley-Corbett, which dates back as far as the time of Henry VIII.

One of its hiding-places, we are told by a correspondent of *Notes and Queries*, 'can only be entered by lifting one of the wooden stairs, and is a very gloomy recess. The house is moated round; and Lady Mary Yate, who is said, as lady of the manor, to have resided here for sixty-five years, successfully defended the building against the attack of a Kidderminster mob who had come to pillage it in the time of James II.' There is, too, the interesting half-timber house of Harborough Hall, midway between Hegley and Kidderminster. Milner, in his *Letters to a Prebendary*, after telling us that 'on two occasions the king (Charles) owed his life to the care and ingenuity of priests, who concealed him in the hiding-hole provided for their own safety,' adds in a foot-note: 'The above-mentioned hiding-hole is still to be seen at the present Mr Whitegrave's house, at Moseley, near Wolverhampton; as is also the priest's hiding-hole—which concealed the king, whilst he did not sit in the oak-tree—at White-ladies, about ten miles from that town.' Again, in the manor-house, Trent, near Sherborne, is a secret chamber, entered from one of the upper rooms through a sliding panel in the oak wainscoting, in which, tradition tells us, Charles II. lay concealed for a fortnight on his escape to the coast after the battle of Worcester. Captain Duthy, in his *Sketches of Hampshire*, writing of the old mansion of Woodcote, says that 'behind a stack of chimneys, accessible only by removing the floor-boards, was an apartment which contained a concealed closet.' Treago, in the neighbourhood of Monmouth, is said to be a good specimen, containing a sleeping-place and a reading-desk; the chamber being lighted by a shot-hole in the wall.

These secret chambers were not uncommon in old Lancashire houses. Thus, at Widness, near Warrington, there is a picturesque Tudor mansion with one of these hiding-places. Some years ago, too, in some fields adjoining this residence were discovered various relics, and amongst them arms, coins, tobacco-pipes, &c., which it has been suggested indicate encampments of Roundhead, and probably afterwards of Dutch, soldiers. At Mains Hall, in the parish of Kirkham, a secret room was accidentally discovered by some workmen behind a stack of chimneys; and another one in an old house in Goosnargh, called Ashes, which has two small cavities in its centre wall, which is about four feet thick. Lydvate Hall, also, as well as Speke Hall, both in Lancashire, had secret chambers, a full description of which is given by Mr Gibson in his interesting little volume entitled *Lydvate Hall and its Associations*. To these we may also add Borwick Hall, and Stonyhurst, the seat of the Sherbournes.

Amongst the houses of this class in Lincolnshire may be noticed Upton Hall, where there is a secret chamber most cleverly contrived. It is about eight feet long, five feet broad, and just high enough to allow a person to stand upright. The opening was accidentally ascertained by removing a beam behind a single step between two servants' bedrooms. Lipscomb, in his *History of Buckinghamshire*, refers to Dinton Hall, near Aylesbury, the seat of Judge Mayne, one of the regicides, to whom it is reported to have given shelter at the time of the Restoration. The secret room was built at the top of the house, under the

beams of the roof, and was reached by a narrow passage lined with cloth. Ufton Hall, near Reading, and Minster-Lovell, Oxfordshire, have both obtained a notoriety as being possessed of these curious secret contrivances, having in consequence at different times attracted considerable notice.

Referring to instances in the north of England, may be noticed Netherhall, near Maryport, Cumberland, the seat of the old family of Senhouse. In this mansion there is reported to be a veritable secret chamber, its exact position in the house being known but to two persons—the heir-at-law and the family solicitor. It is affirmed that never has the secret of this hidden room been revealed to more than two living persons at a time. It has no window, and has hitherto defied the ingenuity of every visitor staying in the house, in spite of all endeavours made to discover it. This Netherhall tradition is very similar to the celebrated one connected with Glamis, only in the latter case the secret chamber possesses a window, which, nevertheless, has not led to the identification of the room. Hodgson, in his *History of Northumberland*, has given a full account of a secret room at Nether-Witton, in Northumberland, formerly the seat of the Thorntons, and now of their lineal descendant, Roger Thornton Trevelyan.

The two secret chambers of Danby Hall in Wensleydale, Yorkshire, deserve notice. One of these was discovered between the hall fireplace and the west wall of the house, and when entered, was found to contain arms and saddlery for a troop of forty or fifty horse. It is generally supposed that these weapons had been hidden away in readiness for the Jacobite rising of 1715 or 1745. The other chamber was situated in the upper story of the old tower, access to which was gained by a narrow staircase in the thickness of the wall; having, it is commonly thought, been used as a chapel. There are, too, the Abbey House, Whitby, the seaside residence of Sir Charles Strickland, and Kirkby-Knowle Castle, near Thirsk. Another remarkable instance, also, is Oxburgh Hall, in the county of Norfolk, which no doubt in days of old was extensively used as a place of concealment.

Evelyn, in his *Diary*, under August 23, 1678, speaks of Ham House at Weybridge, in Surrey, belonging to the Duke of Norfolk, as having some of these secret hiding-places, and says: 'My lord, leading me about the house, made no scruple of showing me all the hiding-places for popish priests, and where they said mass; for he was no bigoted papist.' Again, Paxhill, near Lindfield, in Sussex, is worthy of notice. It is reported to have been built by Dr Andrew Borde, physician and jester to Henry VIII., and the original 'Merry Andrew.' In the ceiling of the ground-floor, we are told, is a large chamber, surrounded by a stone bench, which is entered by a trap-door in the floor above; and behind the shutters of the window in one of the upper rooms is a door, opening into a recess in the wall capable of containing several persons standing upright side by side.

Slindon House, between Arundel and Chichester, a seat of the present Leslie of Balquhain, is one of the most famous residences with secret chambers in this part of the country, and has long been

looked on with much interest. There is, too, a secret room at Moyles Court, the house held by the unfortunate Lady Lisle, who, it may be remembered, died on the scaffold at Winchester, on the charge of concealing fugitives after the battle of Sedgemoor. Nor must we omit to mention Carew Castle, about six miles from Tenby, in which there is a secret hiding-place and passage constructed between the outer and inner walls of the dining-halls. It was built about the time of Henry I., and is described at some length in Fenton's *Historical Tour through Pembrokeshire*. Of other instances in the west of England, Bochym Castle may be noticed, a curious old house in the district between Helston and the Lizard.—(Any further notes regarding these weirdly interesting 'hiding-holes' will be gladly received by us.—*Ed. C. J.*)

## THE ROSERY FOLK.

BY GEORGE MANVILLE FENN.

## CHAPTER XVI.—DOCTOR AND FRIEND.

A WONDERFUL stillness seemed to have fallen, and not even a bird twittered or uttered a note in the hot midsummer sunshine. Once from the distance came the low soft murmur of the weir, but that died away, and scarcely a leaf rustled, so that when the doctor spoke, his firm deep tones sounded as if all nature in that lovely countryside were listening for the verdict he was about to deliver to the stricken man.

'James Scarlett,' he said firmly, 'I hold a double position here: I am your old friend—I am your medical man.'

'Yes,' said Scarlett hoarsely, but without changing his position.

'I am going to speak the simple truth. I am going to hide nothing. I am about to give you plain facts. Will you trust me?'

'Yes. I always have trusted you.'

'Will you believe me? I need not swear?'

'No, Jack, no,' said Scarlett, letting his hands fall from his haggard face. 'I believe your word: I do indeed.'

'You asked me not to leave you.'

'Yes: for pity's sake, stay.'

'I will not leave you; and if I can, I'll bring you back to health.'

'Yes,' said Scarlett, shuddering. 'And you will not let them drag me away. Jack!—Kate has been planning it with Arthur—an asylum—and I dare not speak, I should be so violent, and make it worse.'

'You shan't be dragged away, old man, and you need not fancy that any such plans are being made.'

'Even if it came to the worst,' said Scarlett pitifully, 'you could keep me down. O Jack, I could not bear it; I'd sooner die!'

'Let me speak out at once, my dear boy,' said the doctor. 'The terrible shock to your nerves has made you so weak that you fancy all these things. It is the natural outcome of such a state as yours. Now, listen: you said you would believe me.'

'Yes, yes; and I will.'

'I am glad you have spoken. I knew all this; but I am not sorry you indorsed it. You are haunted by a horrible dread that you are about to lose your reason.'

'Yes,' moaned Scarlett; 'and it is so hard—so hard!'

'Then you may take this comfort to your heart: you are not in the slightest degree likely to become insane; and, what is more, I am as good as certain that, sooner or later, you will recover your health.'

'Jack!'

'You said that you would trust in me.'

'Yes—I did—and I will try—so hard. There, I am trying—you see how I am trying. Stand by me, Jack, and help me. Tell me what to do—do you hear! Tell me what to do!'

'I will,' cried Scales. 'Give me your hand. Stand up—like a man. Now, grasp it firmly. Firmly, man; a good grip.—That's better. Now, listen! What are you to do?'

'Yes: tell me quickly. My own strength is gone.'

'I'll tell you, then,' said the doctor. 'Give yourself up to me as if you were a man who could not swim.'

'Don't talk about the water, Jack. For mercy's sake, don't!'

'I will talk about the water, and you shall listen. Now, then, you must act as if you were helpless and I a strong swimmer. You must trust to me. Recollect, if you struggle and fight against me, you must drown—morally drown: the black waters will close over your spirit, and nothing that I can do will save you. Now, then, drowning man, is it to be trust in the swimmer?—That's right!' he cried, as Scarlett placed his hands upon his arm—'that's well. I won't leave you, James Scarlett, till you are sound and strong as I am now!'

The poor fellow made an effort to speak, but the words would not come. He could only gaze wistfully in his friend's face, his wild eyes looking his gratitude, while they seemed to promise the fidelity of a dog.

'That's right, old fellow. Now, we pretty well understand each other, only I've got to preach at you a little. First of all, I must have full confidence, you know. You must come to me with every symptom and sensation.'

'I will tell you everything,' said Scarlett humbly.

'And I would just make up my mind to meet my troubles like a man. You have yours now; and it comes the more painfully after a long course of prosperity and happiness; but even then, old fellow, life is too good a gift to talk of throwing it away.'

Scarlett shuddered, and the doctor watched him narrowly.

'Existence accompanied by a most awful fit of neuralgia would not be pleasant; but all the same I would not refuse it, even with those conditions, for the intervals when the neuralgia is not stinging you are about the most delicious moments by contrast that can be imagined.'

'Yes, yes; of course.'

'Well, then, now let us go and join them on the lawn. What do you say to beginning to fight the nervous foe at once?'

'Yes, at once,' said Scarlett, speaking as if under the influence of the doctor.

'Come along, then; and we shall master the foe yet.'

Scarlett hesitated and hung back; but the

doctor did not speak. He could see that his patient was trying to avoid his eye. Once Scarlett glanced up, but the look was rapid as lightning. He saw that the doctor was watching him, and he avoided his look again instantly, like a schoolboy who had committed some fault. At the end of a minute, though, he gradually raised his eyes again, slowly and furtively, and in a way that troubled the doctor more than he would have cared to own; but he had his consolation directly in finding his patient gazing fully at him at last, Scarlett uttering a low sigh of satisfaction, as if he rejoiced at being in charge of a stronger will than his own; and then, without a word, they moved towards the lawn.

'I must do my bit of fighting too,' said the doctor to himself, as his eyes fell upon Lady Martlett. 'She's very handsome; she knows it; and she wants to make me feel it; but she shall not.—Humph! How that fellow Prayle hangs about Mrs Scarlett's side. They can't always be wanting to talk over business matters.'

'Well, James, have you had a pleasant stroll?' said Aunt Sophia, as the two men joined the group.

'Yes—very,' he answered quietly.

'Have you seen how the peaches are getting on upon the little bush?' she continued.

'I? No. I have not been in the peach-house for days.'

'You don't go half often enough. Let's go now.'

'What, I? N'— The poor fellow met the doctor's eye, and said hastily: 'Well, yes; I will, aunt.—Will you come too, Naomi?'

'O yes,' cried the girl eagerly.

'Perhaps Lady Martlett will come and see the rosy-cheeked beauties of the peach-house?' said the doctor half-mockingly.—'She'll give me such a snub,' he added to himself.

'Yes; I should like to see them,' said her Ladyship quietly; 'my gardener tells me that they are far more beautiful than mine.'

'I should have thought it impossible,' cried the doctor. 'Your Ladyship's wealth and position ought to be able to secure for you everything.'

'But it does not,' retorted Lady Martlett; 'not even such a simple thing as deference or respect.'

'Ah, but money could not buy those—at least not genuine, sterling qualities of that kind, Lady Martlett,' said the doctor, as they moved towards the end of the garden.

'So it seems, Doctor Scales.'

'There are some people who even have the impertinence to look down upon the rich who do not carry their honours with graceful humility.'

'How dares he speak to me like this!' thought Lady Martlett; 'but I'll humble him yet.'

'Let me see,' she replied coolly; 'what do you call that class of person—a radical, is it not?'

'Yes; I suppose that is the term.'

'And I understand that there are radicals of all kinds: in politics; in those who pass judgment on social behaviour; and even in medicine.'

'That's a clever thrust,' thought the doctor.—'Just so, Lady Martlett; and I am one of the radicals in medicine.'



'Of course, then, not in social matters, Doctor Scales?'

'Will your Ladyship deign to notice the tints upon these peaches?' said the doctor evasively.—'Here is one,' he continued, lowering his voice, 'that seems as if it had been mocking you, when your cheek is flushed with the exercise of riding, and you imperiously command the first poor wretch who passes your way to open the gate.'

'The peaches look very fine,' replied her Ladyship, refusing to notice the remark.—'much finer than mine, Mrs Scarlett. My head-gardener says that some disease has attacked the leaves.'

'You should invite Doctor Scales over to treat the ailment,' said Aunt Sophia archly.—'My dear James, what is the matter?'

'It is too bad—it is disgraceful!' cried Scarlett, stamping his foot. 'Because I am weak and ill, every one imposes on me. That old scoundrel has been neglecting everything.'

'What! Monnick?' cried Aunt Sophia.

'Yes.—Oh, here you are!' he cried more angrily. 'Look, Kate, you ought to be more particular.'

'What is wrong, dear?' exclaimed Mrs Scarlett anxiously, as she entered the peach-house, closely followed by Prayle.

'Everything is wrong,' cried the unhappy man, gazing at her wildly. 'I cannot bear it.' He hurried from the peach-house, followed by the doctor, who calmed him by degrees.

'The place in such a state! It is too bad. I set such store by the peaches.'

'And I set such store by your recovery, old fellow,' said the doctor. 'That was a wretched fit of temper; but it's over now. Don't worry about it, man; and now go and lie down till dinner-time.'

'No—no; I have no wish to'—

'Mind what I say.—Yes, you have, my dear boy. Come: a quiet nap till dinner-time, and then you will have forgotten this petty trouble, and be fresh and cool.'

#### CHAPTER XVII.—MR SAXBY HAS ASPIRATIONS.

A couple of months had passed.

'Mr Saxby wants to speak to you, ma'am,' said Fanny; and Aunt Sophia jumped up in a pet. 'What does he want now? This is four times he has been down this month. Where is he?'

'In the study, ma'am. He wouldn't come in here.'

Aunt Sophia entered the study to find quite a strong odour in the room. It was something between lemon-scented verbenas and magnolia; and as soon as she noticed it, she began to sniff, with the result that the busy City man, so strong in his office, so weak outside, began to turn red.

'Well, Mr Saxby,' said Aunt Sophia, 'have you sold those consols for me?'

'Yes, ma'am, as you insisted; but you'll excuse me, I'm sure, when I tell you that'—

'There, there, man! I know what you are going to say; but it is my own money, and I shall do with it what I please, and'— Sniff, sniff, sniff. 'Whatever is it smells so strong?'

'Strong, ma'am, strong?' said Mr Saxby, wiping his brow, for Aunt Sophia had a peculiar effect upon him, causing him to grow moist about the

palms of his hands and dew to form upon his temples.

'Why, it's that handkerchief, man; and you've been putting scent upon your hair!'

'Well, a little, ma'am, just a little,' replied Saxby, with a smile that was more indicative of feebleness than strength. 'I was coming into the country, you see, and, ahem!—sweets to the sweet.'

'Stuff!—Now about that money.'

'There's the cheque, ma'am,' said Mr Saxby, taking out his pocket-book; 'but I give it to you with regret; and—let me beg of you, my dear madam, to be guided by me.'

'That will do, Saxby. I know what I am about; and now, I suppose you have some eligible investment to propose?'

'Well, no, my dear madam; no. Things are very quiet. Money's cheap as dirt.'

'May I ask, then, why you have come down?'

'The—er—the cheque, my dear madam.'

'Might very well have come by post, Mr Saxby.'

'Yes; but I was anxious to see and hear about how poor Scarlett is getting on; to say a few words of condolence to Mrs Scarlett. I esteem them both very highly, Miss Raleigh; I do indeed.'

'Dear me! Ah!' said Aunt Sophia; 'and—Shall I finish for you, Saxby?'

'Finish for me, my dear madam? I do not understand.'

'Then I will, Saxby: you thought that if you came down and brought the cheque, you might perhaps see my niece.'

'My dear madam! My dear Miss Raleigh! Really, my dear madam!'

'Don't be a sham, Saxby. Own it like a man.'

Mr Saxby looked helplessly round the room, as if in search of help—even of an open door through which he could escape; but there was none; and whenever he looked straight before him, there was the unrelenting eye of the elderly maiden lady fixed upon him, and seeming to read him through and through. He wished that he had not come; he wished that he could bring his office effrontery down with him; he wished that he could make Aunt Sophia quail, as he could his clerks; but all in vain. Aunt Sophia, to use her own words, could turn him round her finger when she had him there, and at last he gasped out: 'Well—there—I'll be honest about it—I did'—

'I didn't need telling,' interrupted Aunt Sophia.

'I believe, Saxby, I could even tell you what you are thinking now.'

'O nonsense, ma'am—nonsense!'

'O yes, I could,' retorted Aunt Sophia sharply. 'You were thinking that I was a wretched old griffin, and you wished I was dead.'

'Wrong!' cried Saxby triumphantly, and speaking more like himself. 'I'll own to the griffin; but never to the wishing you dead!'

'Why, you know you think she'll have my money, Saxby.'

'Bother your money, ma'am!' cried the stock-broker sharply. 'I've got plenty of my own, and can make more; and as to yours—why, if it hadn't been for me, you wouldn't have a penny. It would be all gone in some swindling Company.'

—I—I beg your pardon, Miss Raleigh; I—ah—really—ah—I'm afraid I rather forgot myself—I'—

'You're quite right, Saxby, quite right,' said Aunt Sophia quietly. 'I'm afraid I am a very stupid, sanguine, old woman over money matters, and you have saved me several times.—But now about Naomi. Whatever is it you want?'

'What do I want?' repeated Saxby.

'Yes. Why do you come hanging about here like this? Do you want to marry the girl?'

'Well—er—yes, my dear madam; to be candid, that is what I thought. For ever since the day when I first set—'

'Thank you: that will do, Saxby. Rhapsodies do sound such silly stuff to people at my age. Really, if you talk like that, I shall feel as if it would be madness to come to consult you again on business.'

'But really, my dear madam'—

'Yes,' said Aunt Sophia, interrupting; 'I know. Well, then, we'll grant that you like her.'

'Like her, madam? I worship her!'

'No: don't, my good man. Let's be sensible, if we can. My niece Naomi is a very nice, sensible, good girl.'

'She's an angel, ma'am!'

'No; she is not,' said Aunt Sophia stiffly; 'and so the man who marries her will find. She's only a nice English girl, and I don't want her feelings hurt by any one.'

'Miss Raleigh, it would be my study to spare her feelings in every way.'

'If you had the opportunity, my good man. As it happens, I must speak plainly to you, and tell you that I am afraid she has formed an attachment to Mr Prayle.'

'To him!' groaned Saxby.

'Now, look here, Mr Saxby; if you are going to act sensibly, I'll talk to you; if you are going on like that, I've done. This is not part of a play.'

'Yes, ma'am, it is,' returned Saxby dolefully; 'the tragedy of my life.'

'Now, don't be a goose, Saxby. If the girl likes somebody else better than you, don't go making yourself miserable about it. Have some common-sense.'

'There's no common-sense in love.'

Aunt Sophia looked at him in a half-pitying, half-contemptuous manner. 'It isn't very deep, is it?' she said good-humouredly.

'I don't know,' he replied; 'only, that somehow she's seemed to me to be like the flowers; and when I've gone to my office every morning, I've bought a rose or something of that kind, and put it in water, and it's been company to me, as if she was there all the time. And now, after what you've told me, ma'am, I don't think I shall ever buy a rose again.' He got up, walked to the window and looked out, so that Aunt Sophia should not see his face.

'Poor fellow!' she whispered softly to herself. '—Mr Prayle has not spoken to Naomi yet,' said Aunt Sophia at last.

'Does he—does he—care for her very much?'

Aunt Sophia hesitated for a few moments, and then seemed to make up her mind. 'I don't know,' she replied; 'but I'll speak plainly to you, Saxby, for I like you.'

'You—Miss Raleigh!—you—like—me?'

'Yes. Why shouldn't I?'

'Because—because'—

'Yes; I know. Because you opposed me sometimes. Well, a woman likes to be opposed. Some stupid people say that a woman likes to have her own way in everything. It isn't true.'

'But don't raise my hopes, Miss Raleigh—don't, pray, if there's no chance for me.'

'I'm not going to raise your hopes—not much. I shall only say to you, that I am sorry about my niece's leanings, and that perhaps, after all, it is but a girlish fancy. If I were a man'—

'Yes, Miss Raleigh, if you were a man.'

'And cared for a woman, I should never give her up till I saw that my case was quite hopeless.'

'Miss Raleigh,' cried the stockbroker excitedly, 'your words are like fresh air in a hot office. One thinks more clearly; life seems better worth living for; and there's a general rise of one's natural stock all over a fellow's market.—Might I kiss your hand?'

'Certainly not; but you may behave sensibly. Stop down a day or two, and see how the land lies.'

'May I?'

'Yes; I'll answer for your welcome.—And now, mind this: I'm not going to interfere with my niece and her likes and dislikes; but let me give you a bit of advice.'

'If you would!' exclaimed Saxby.

'Then don't go about sighing like a bull-goose. Women don't care for such weak silly creatures. Naomi's naturally weak, and what she looks for in a man is strength both in brain and body.'

'Yes, I see,' sighed the love-lorn Saxby. 'I understand stocks and shares, but I don't understand women.'

'Of course, you don't. No man yet ever did; not even Solomon, with all his experience; and no man ever will.'

'But I thought, Miss Raleigh—I hoped'—

'Well, what did you think and hope?'

'That you might help me—as an old and trustworthy friend—about Miss Naomi.'

'Why, bless the boy—man, I mean—if I were to tell Naomi to love you, or that she was to be your wife, she'd do as all girls do.'

'What is that, Miss Raleigh?'

'What's that? Why, go off at a tangent, whatever that may be, and marry Prayle at once.'

'Ah, yes, I suppose so,' faltered Saxby.

'Well, well, pluck up your spirits, man, and be what you are at your office. I do trust you, Saxby; and to show you my confidence, I'll tell you frankly that I should be deeply grieved if anything came of her leanings towards that smooth, good-looking fellow.—There, what stuff I am talking. You ought to be able to get on without advice from me.' With these words Aunt Sophia smiled and nodded her head at the stockbroker, after which she sailed out of the room.

#### CHAPTER XVIII.—ALTHOUGH AN OLD MAID.

'Well, doctor?'

'Well, Miss Raleigh.'

'You do not bring him round.'

'I don't. He is worried mentally, too, and I can't get at his complaint.'

'Why not take him away, and give him a complete change?'

Doctor Scales injured John Monnick's beautiful turf, that he had been at such trouble to make grow under the big mulberry tree, by suddenly screwing round his garden-seat, to stare in Aunt Sophia's face. 'I say,' he exclaimed, 'are you a reader of thoughts or a prophetess?'

'Neither. Why?'

'Because you are proposing what I have planned.'

'Indeed! Well, is it not a good proposal?'

'Excellent; but he will not listen to it. He dare not go outside the place, he says; and I believe that at first he would suffer terribly, for it is quite shocking how weak his nerves have become. He has a horror of the most trivial things; and above all, there is something troubling the brain.'

'What can it be?' asked Aunt Sophia.

'Well—— I'm speaking very plainly to you, Miss Raleigh.'

'Of course. We trust each other, doctor.'

'Exactly. Well, in a case like this, it is only natural that the poor fellow should feel his position deeply, and be troubling himself about his wife.'

'But she seems to be most attentive to him.'

'O yes; she never neglects him,' replied the doctor, hurriedly going into another branch of his subject. 'His money affairs, too, seem to worry him a great deal; and I know it causes him intense agony to be compelled by his weakness to leave so much to other hands.'

'But his cousin—Mr Prayle—seems to be devoting himself heart and soul to their management.'

'O yes; he seems indefatigable; and Mrs Scarlett is always watching over his interests; but no man can find an adequate substitute for himself.'

Aunt Sophia watched her companion anxiously, asking herself what he really thought, and then half bitterly reflecting how very shallow after all their trust was of each other upon this delicate question of James Scarlett's health. As she looked, she could not help seeing that the doctor's eyes were fixed upon hers with a close scrutiny; and it was with almost a malicious pleasure that she said quietly a few words, and watched the result: 'You know, I suppose, that Lady Martlett is coming here to dinner this evening?'

'Coming here? To dinner? This evening?'

'Yes. Is there anything so wonderful in that?'

'O no; of course not. Only—that is—I am a little surprised.'

'I don't see why you should be surprised. Lady Martlett always made a great friend of Mrs Scarlett, from the time she first came down.'

'Yes; I think I have heard so. Of course, there is nothing surprising, except in their great diversity of tastes.'

'Extremes meet, doctor,' said Aunt Sophia smiling; 'and that will be the case when you take her Ladyship down to dinner.'

'I? Take her down?—No, not I,' said Scales quickly. 'In fact, I was thinking of running up to town to-day. There is an old friend of mine, who has studied nervous diseases a great

deal in the Paris hospitals; he is over for a few weeks, and I thought I would consult him.'

'At the expense of running away, and making it appear to be because Lady Martlett is coming to dinner.'

'Oh; but that idea would be absurd.'

'I don't know that, doctor, because, you see, it would be so true. There, there; don't look cross. I am not an obstinate patient. Why, doctor, are you afraid of her?'

'No; I am more afraid of myself,' he retorted bitterly; 'and I have some pride, Miss Raleigh.'

'Too much—far too much.—Do you know, doctor, I am turning match-maker in my old age?'

'A worthy pursuit, if you could make good matches.'

'Well, would it not be a good one between you and Lady Martlett?'

'Admirable!' he cried, in a bitterly ironical tone. 'The union of a wealthy woman, who has a right to make a brilliant contract with some one of her own class, to a beggarly, penniless doctor, whose head is full of absurd crotchets.—Miss Raleigh, Miss Raleigh, where is your discrimination!'

'In my brains, I suppose,' replied Aunt Sophia; 'though I do not see how that portion of our organisation can make plans and plots.'

'Then you are plotting and planning to marry me to Lady Martlett.'

'It needed neither,' said Aunt Sophia. 'You worked out the union yourselves. She is very fond of you.'

'Ha-ha-ha!' laughed the doctor harshly.

'And you think her the most attractive woman you ever saw.'

'Granted. But that does not prove that I love her. No; I love my profession. James Scarlett's health is my idol, until I have cured him—if I ever do. Then I shall look out for another patient, Miss Raleigh.'

'It is my turn now to laugh, doctor. Why, what a transparent man you are!'

'I hope so,' he replied.

'But you will stay to dinner this evening?'

'No, madam; I shall go to town.'

'You will not!' said Aunt Sophia, smiling.

'It would be too cowardly of you.'

'No, no; I must go,' he half-insisted. 'She would make me her slave, and trample upon my best instincts. It would not do, Miss Raleigh. As it is, I am free. Poor enough, heaven knows! but independent, and—I hope—a gentleman.'

'Of course,' said Aunt Sophia gravely.

'Granting that I could win her—the idea seems contemptible presumption—what would follow? In her eyes, as well as in those of the whole world, I should have sacrificed my independence. I should have degraded myself; and in place of being spoken of in future as a slightly clever, eccentric doctor, I should sink into a successful fortune-hunter—a man admitted into the society that receives his wife, as her lapdog would be, at the end of a string. I couldn't do it, my dear madam; I could not bear it; for the galling part would be that I deserved my fate.'

'I hope you do not exaggerate your patients' cases as you do your own, doctor.'

'No exaggeration, my dear madam. Take

another side of the question. Suppose I did sink my pride—suppose my Lady did condescend from her high pedestal to put a collar round my neck—how then? What should I be worth, leading such a lapdog existence? What would become of my theories, my efforts to make discoveries in our grand profession? Oh, Miss Raleigh, Miss Raleigh, I did think I had won some little respect from you! What would you say if you saw me lower myself to such an extent as that?’

Aunt Sophia smiled. ‘There would be something extremely droll to a bystander, if he heard all this. You talking of stooping!’

‘Well, would it not be?’ he cried.

‘With some women, yes; but you don’t yet know Lady Martlett.—Oh, most apropos: she has come early, so as to have a pleasant afternoon without form. Doctor Scales, you are too late; you will have to stay.’

### A DANCING EPIDEMIC.

IN this country, the tarantella is only known as one of those coquettish dances introduced on the stage from Italy; and in its native land, as a dance performed by the peasant-girls to the accompaniment of the tambourine. But if this were all that the name recalls, it would scarcely be worthy of more than a passing notice, except by those who are devoted to the terpsichorean art. Connected as is the tarantella with one of the strangest epidemics, the dancing madness, formerly believed to have resulted from the bite of the tarantula spider, it offers us many points of interest, not only as a medical study, but also as an episode in philosophical history.

As the ancients had their Orpheus, who, by his musical powers, was said to be able to enchant not only living creatures, but even stocks and stones, so have the Italians, or rather they had, their tarantella fable, concerning a madness whose victims danced to the sound of music until they fell exhausted, and then—danced again. The disease is known as tarantismus, and is conveniently classed with that peculiar nervous affection commonly called St Vitus’s dance.

The historian of civilisation and of the inner life of the human race is often called aside to speculate on the origin of diseases whose birth is involved in obscurity, and which only come before the observer when they have attained their full strength, or when they have gained complete ascendancy over men’s minds and bodies. Italy in the early middle ages has been the theatre of many terrible epidemics. The crusaders, for example, brought the Eastern plague; and between 1119 and 1340, no fewer than sixteen visitations of that fearful malady are recorded. The misery resulting therefrom was heartbreaking, the victims countless; scarcely did the country seem to recover from one attack, when another came and overwhelmed it. It appeared as if the Italians were to be wiped off the face of the earth. To all these must be reckoned those political diseases, wars, rebellions, conspiracies, murders, consequent on the jealousies or ambition of the various petty states into which the peninsula was divided. Then in 1348, as if these disasters were not enough, came the dreaded Black Death; and after that, a famine. These fearful scourges doubtless troubled men’s minds, working up their nerves to an

unhealthy pitch, and these not the nerves of a phlegmatic northern race, but of those excitable children of the sun, the people of Southern Italy. Always a finely-strung race, and at this time involved in gross ignorance and superstition, they were just ripe for a nervous epidemic.

All history is full of the great events which the smallest, the most trivial circumstance may call forth. Though the exact circumstances under which this epidemic arose are involved in mystery, yet we may probably safely assume that they were in some way or other connected with a common earth-spider, the tarantula. Even strong-nerved people do not, as a rule, willingly handle an earth-spider; whilst finely-strung individuals would think of such a proceeding with the utmost horror. It does not require a very lively imagination to conceive that some excitable Italian, believing his people given over to the sword of Azael, the Angel of Death, might innocently enough take the lead in this nervous epidemic, for which a whole nation was ripe. Perhaps accidentally bitten by one of these loathsome spiders, he would work himself up to such a pitch that he would think himself poisoned. Though the bite itself might not be dangerous—and indeed modern research has shown that it is not—yet the dread of the unknown after-results would make it dangerous in the extreme. We may probably—as most of the victims of this epidemic were women—safely assume that this first bitten individual was an hysterical female, and then we have all the preliminaries necessary for the explanation of the origin of the disease. When this hysterical female was bitten, imagination would perform the rest; it would play the principal rôle, and it would make the disease epidemic.

The earliest mention of tarantismus is found in the works of Nicolas Perotti, who died in 1480. It appeared first in Apulia, and at the time of this author, seems to have fairly well established itself as a disease in that province. It is spoken of as having been produced by the bite of the wolf-spider, an earth species of light-brown colour, with black stripes, known to science as the *Lycosa tarantula Apulica*. This creature is found generally distributed throughout Italy and Spain; and many an old traveller has told wonderful stories of the effect of its bite, which was accredited as poisonous. The part bitten, according to the common belief, became swollen, and smarted; the victim became low-spirited, trembled, and was anxious; he was troubled with nausea, giddiness, and at length fell down in a swoon. All exterior circumstances powerfully affected him; he was easily excited to frenzy or depressed to melancholy, and behaved generally as an hysterical subject would do. The strangest effect, or rather supposed effect, of the bite was the behaviour of the patient at the sound of music; for he immediately rose and danced as madly as do the wicked people in the fairy tale at the sound of the hero’s enchanted pipe. However the patient may have been affected at the outset, he seems invariably to have fallen into a swoon—the result of nervous exhaustion—from which music and music only could relieve him; but neither music nor any other remedy could permanently cure him.

Poisonous spiders were supposed by the ancients



to have been common enough; but they do not seem to have recorded the supposed effects of their bite. In fact, they appear to have reserved them as *Dei ex machina* to bring about the dénouement of a much involved popular tale. The absence, however, of particular descriptions of the disease called tarantismus will not furnish us with proofs either one way or the other as to its existence or non-existence; for, in early times, all those who suffered from strange or little understood mental or nervous diseases were roughly classed together as unfortunates suffering from the touch of Satan. Hence, in the fifteenth century, we suddenly come upon a full description of tarantismus as a common and widely spread disease. In the next century, Fracastro, a celebrated physician, relates that his steward having been bitten in the neck by the tarantula or some other creature, fell down in a death-like stupor; but when he gave him the remedies then in vogue for plague and hydrophobia, he recovered.

Meanwhile, tarantismus passed the boundaries of Apulia; and shortly afterwards there was scarcely a corner of Italy where it was not too well known. As it spread, it obtained more believers; and the more credence it obtained, the more victims it attacked. This alone would tend to prove that the disease depended greatly for its existence on the power of the imagination. Everywhere, as we suppose, it was the hysterical temperaments which suffered, for dull heavy louts are rarely subject to affections of the nerves.

Of course, ordinary medical treatment failed to touch the disease; and this of itself would tend to exaggerate its power and frequency. Nothing brought relief but lively dance-music, and of this the old tunes *La Pastorale* and *La Tarantola* were the most efficacious; the former for phlegmatic, the latter for excitable temperaments. When these tunes were played with correctness and taste, the effect was magical. The tarantanti danced energetically until they fell down exhausted. Old and young, male and female, healthy and infirm, began dancing like machines worked by steam. Old writers would have us believe that even old cripples threw away their crutches and danced with the best. Hysterical females were the principal victims. Other ailments were forgotten, propriety of time and place ignored, and soul and body, they delivered themselves up to this dancing frenzy. They shrieked, they wept, they laughed, they sang, all the time dancing like bacchantes or furies, till at last they fell down bathed in perspiration and utterly helpless. If the music continued, they at length arose and danced again, until once more they fell prostrate. These fits seem to have continued two or three days, sometimes four, or even six, for the relief seems to have been in direct ratio to the amount lost by perspiration. When the tarantant had by this means recovered, he or she remained free from the disease until the approach of the warm weather of the next year, and then was again relieved in the same manner. Once a tarantant, however, always a tarantant; one woman is mentioned as being subject to these attacks for thirty summers.

We have described the commoner symptoms of tarantismus. Sometimes, however, the effects of the disease were ludicrous or curious enough. Black or sombre colours were generally obnoxious,

producing extreme melancholia; whilst scarlet or green, and occasionally blue, was much liked. When a person was under the influence of the paroxysm, and an object of the favourite colour approached, the tarantant rushed to it, fondled it, kissed it, embraced it, whether it was a human being or an inanimate object. The patient was, in fact, entirely given up to a love-frenzy for this object, which was sometimes, as may be supposed, inconvenient enough; and yet nothing but physical impossibility could prevent these results. On the contrary, objects of the hated colours produced extreme melancholy; and not unfrequently brought on stupor. Some tarantanti affected churchyards and cemeteries; others were fascinated by the passing bell. Another class conceived a passion for the sea, and would rush into its waves; whilst others of these water-lovers would carry about with them a glassful of the brilliant liquid, and would strive to the utmost not to spill the smallest drop, even when dancing; while, if they did not succeed in this gymnastic feat, they were seized with melancholy.

It was at length quite a profession to travel through the country in the early summer to cure the tarantanti. A pipe, a tambourine, and a knowledge of the favourite dance-tunes, were all that was necessary. When the musicians arrived at a town or village, a fête, known as the women's *carnavaletta*, was held. Everybody hastened down to the spot where the dancing was going on, and the mere sight of this frequently so excited the spectators, that those who had never been suspected of tarantismus, would suddenly join in the proceedings and become tarantanti for life. And thus this epidemic went on increasing, until few persons could claim to be entirely exempt, and Italy seemed in danger of becoming a nation of frenzied hysterical dancers. But though the symptoms were distressing and marked enough while they lasted, yet the disease was harmless enough on the whole, for it is supposed that the mortality resulting therefrom never exceeded one in five hundred.

It was in the seventeenth century that the tarantismus epidemic reached its fullest development and its greatest extension, and then, as if by magic, it went out of fashion, as suddenly as a piece of millinery; for there is a fashion in disease as well as in the cut of a garment. No one was attacked; people wondered that such things had been possible; and they wondered still more that they themselves had taken part in them. So thorough was the change in this respect, that, in the eighteenth century, doctors began to express doubts as to whether the disease had ever existed; and in our own days the name *tarantella* scarcely calls up an idea, except as connected with the coquettish dance of the peasant-girl in her picturesque Italian costume to the accompaniment of the tambourine. Nor was it in Italy alone where this dancing madness found its votaries, for even the stolid German at one time gave way to it.

From the description, it will be seen that tarantismus was a peculiar and hysterical development of the disease known as St Vitus's dance; for, as might be expected, so far as the tarantula spider is concerned, the whole belief is a myth, an old wives' fable. Though it may not be pleasant to be bitten by one of these creatures,

yet it is comforting to learn that at least the bite is no more noisome than that of the ordinary spider. We must therefore look for the origin of the disease in the state of the nerves. In an excitable, nervous temperament, worked to the highest pitch by brooding over diseases which had cut men down like grass before the mower's scythe, a trivial circumstance, such as the bite of an insect, may have an important result. It only requires a number of nervous, hysterical individuals to be in sympathy one with another to produce ridiculous results; then if, during the frenzy, one of these finds himself bitten or stung by some noisome creature, all the others immediately assume that they too are bitten or stung; community of suffering must have a common cause, say they.

It is probable that practical modern men and women will at once say: 'Oh, this is all a myth; tarantismus never did exist—or we should see examples of it to-day.' But is the disease unknown to the modern practitioner? Surely not. It is unfrequent, it is true; but several cases have been reported in the medical literature of the day; and the leaping ague of the Scotch is certainly a similar disease. The more healthy accompaniments of modern life and our greater knowledge naturally have a tendency to prevent such epidemics attaining such a power as did tarantismus; but for all that, the subject is worthy our notice. Perhaps the dancing or jumping, the quivering or quaking, which occurs during the worship of some of our religious communities, Christian as well as heathen, may be more nearly connected with tarantismus than is generally supposed. The excitement is there, and excitement is contagious.

### MISS RIVERS'S REVENGE.

#### IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

It will simplify matters if I say at once that I am a strange girl. After this confession, you will be more inclined to believe that my story is a true one, and, it may be, condemn my conduct less. If your godfathers and godmothers think fit to give you a strange name, they can scarcely expect you to be exactly the same as other people; and the name some one chose to christen me by is a strange one. 'Heritage' is certainly not in common use; although, when one gets accustomed to it, it sounds soft and rather pretty, especially so when coupled with my surname. 'Heritage Rivers' is not at all bad.

I am quite sure that in most instances people's natures accommodate themselves to their names. Nearly all the Lucys I have known have been fair and romantic; nearly all the Janes and Susans homely and fond of housekeeping. A girl's career seems often to be settled by her name. So, having no precedent to show me what the owner of the name of Heritage should be like, I always plead it as an excuse for any peculiarities of disposition. Nevertheless, I am not called upon to dissect my mental qualities for the benefit of the inquisitive, so shall only say that one of my chief characteristics is that of being a good hater. I like and respect a good hater. No doubt, it is unchristianlike; but it is so natural. I am not ashamed to say that if people injure me,

I don't forget or forgive until I feel I am about even with them. Of course, if any one who had wronged me asked forgiveness, I should forgive freely enough—I don't see how that can be avoided—but I should never be eager to do my enemy a good turn unless I felt quite sure of heaping coals of fire upon his head! Now you know what manner of being I am; and very dreadful the description looks as I write it; so dreadful, that I am obliged to comfort myself by thinking of the reverse of the picture—that I can be as true a friend as an enemy.

It is not so many years ago that I, Heritage Rivers, a slim girl of seventeen, left school, and stepped out into the grown-up world to meet what fate awaited me. For the time, my only idea was to enjoy my freedom. It was delightful to think that masters and mistresses were finished and done with for ever and a day. So I bade them a glad adieu, and went down into the country to stay with an aunt of mine, and for several weeks revelled in sunshine and liberty. Then, in accordance with a solemn promise, I spent some little time with an old school-friend—one like myself, just emancipated. Her people lived at Twickenham, in a delicious old house with a large garden. I was made heartily welcome. The mother took me to her heart, as her daughter's dearest friend. The father, a courtly gray-haired man, with literary tastes and pursuits, was kindness and politeness itself; whilst Clara Ramsay's brothers were in an hour my devoted slaves and lovers. Surrounded by such pleasant attentions, I began to realise the fact that I was now a grown-up young lady, not altogether unattractive; and so valued myself accordingly.

As the Ramsays were quiet people and kept little company, an announcement made by Mr Ramsay that a dinner-party was projected, was sufficient to flutter our hearts. For several days before it took place, we discussed again and again the merits of the guests who were to be present. As Clara knew them all except one, her interest was centred on the probable appearance of this gentleman. As even mamma did not know him, all information respecting him must be extracted from Mr Ramsay, whose friend he was. Girls being inquisitive creatures, Clara, at breakfast-time, egged on by me, began her inquiries.

'Who is Mr Vincent Hope, papa?'

'A friend of mine, my dear. A very clever young man, who will one day, I think, be a most distinguished member of society.'

So far as it went, this reply was satisfactory; but we wanted a categorical testimonial, not a general one.

'How will he distinguish himself?' asked Clara.

'He is a rising author—little known as yet; but all that must come.'

'O dear!' sighed Clara plaintively; 'I know exactly the sort of man. I have seen so many of them here. Of course he wears spectacles?'

'I don't think he does—or if so, I never noticed them,' replied Mr Ramsay.

'You never notice anything you ought to, papa. But he is sure to have a horrid beard—unkempt and uncared for. They all have.'

'He has no beard, I fancy,' answered Mr Ramsay meditatively.

'Is he good-looking and nice?' demanded the audacious Clara.

Mr Ramsay looked much amused at his daughter's question. 'I find him nice,' he said. 'But what a chit of a girl like you may find him, is another matter—a very small matter. I should think that most people would call him extremely good-looking.'

'Is he dark or fair—tall or short?'

'My dear girl, I shall answer no more questions about him. Why don't you imitate the discretion of Miss Rivers, who seems free from your failing—curiosity?'

I blushed at such undeserved praise; whilst Clara, to show her opinion of my false pretences, nudged me under the table.

Although Mr Ramsay would tell us nothing more, we, in our idle moments, which were many, speculated a great deal as to the probable personal appearance of Mr Vincent Hope. I had a certain right to feel some anxiety about the matter, as it transpired that it would be my lot to be taken in to dinner by him; therefore, it was a great comfort to me to hear he wore neither spectacles nor beard.

'I know he will be delightful!' cried Clara. 'I feel sure the whole matter is arranged by fate. Of course he will fall in love with you at once! Who could help doing so? You will look so nice, Heritage!'

This is the way in which foolish young women chatter at times.

It would be my first dinner-party—an ordeal always trying to a young girl. Anyway, I dreaded it. In spite of Clara's well-meant compliments, my mind was not easy. I mistrusted the appearance I should present. My new dress, I fancied, fitted me badly; and I was haunted by a presentiment that my hands and the backs of my arms were destined to grow crimson. So distressing were my fears, that, as the hour approached, I would much rather have joined the boys, who, not being admitted to the feast, had gone off for a jolly long row on the river—'to get out of it all,' they said.

As I dressed myself, I wondered whether I should quite know what to eat, what to drink; and above all, if any one should deign to speak to me, what to talk about. Perhaps, I thought, all this comes instinctively. If, happily, such is the case, could it be possible, as Clara boldly predicted, that I should carry the little world by storm? I took one last glance at the mirror. After all, I don't look so very much amiss. Then, a few minutes before the hour struck, I entered the drawing-room, feeling almost sanguine.

The guests arrived—two by two. 'Like animals going into the ark,' whispered Clara, who, having seen a little more society than I had, seemed quite at her ease. Mr Vincent Hope, as became a distinguished man, was late. At last, it was not until a few moments before dinner was announced that Mr Ramsay brought a gentleman to me and presented him. We bent to each other; then, taking his arm, I joined the procession to the dining-room. Of course I dropped my fan, or something, by the way. This necessitated my cavalier's stooping down to recover possession of it, thereby delaying all the couples behind us for a moment or two. I was beginning badly. We sank into our appointed places, and as the

soup was being handed round, Mr Hope addressed a few ordinary remarks to me. Then I began to realise how shy—how stupid a person I was. The only words my foolish tongue seemed capable of forming were 'Yes' and 'No.' Connected words had left me for an indefinite period. I felt my conversational shortcomings so acutely, that it was some little while before I was able to look at my neighbour, except furtively and timidly. He was tall, I knew; that fact had made itself manifest as we walked arm-in-arm. I had also received a sort of impression that he was good-looking. At last, when able to really look at him, I found that Mr Ramsay's account, so far as it went, was a true one. The young man was undoubtedly handsome. His eyes—the feature a woman first looks at—were good; gray, I decided, with dark lashes. His face was pale, and bore a look of refinement. His forehead was high—not too high—and his chin was large, and gave him the appearance of possessing considerable force of character. Above all, his nose was straight, and his hands well shapen. Twenty-eight, I should have guessed his age. Altogether, a very creditable young man. Fate had been kind in selecting this companion for me, if only I could find something to talk about—something so gifted a creature as he was reported to be would not be bored with. Alas, for me, the conversation field seemed to have become suddenly barren of flowers of speech—not even a bud was left! Yet amongst people with whom I am at home, I had never yet been accused of taciturnity.

For some short time the lady on the other side of him saved me. She appeared to know him, and complimented him on the success of an article in one of the reviews, which she attributed to him. He thanked her for her praise; spoke a few words on general subjects; then, as I suppose, in duty bound, turned to me and recommenced conversation. In five minutes, I positively hated myself and Mr Vincent Hope! It may be kindness to bring one's intellect down to the level of the listener; I call it conceit! If, in spite of my elaborate new dress, he could not help seeing I was but a school-girl, was there any reason why he should so plainly show me he saw it? Was there any reason why he should quite change the manner of his discourse as he changed his listener—should talk to me in a way he evidently thought suited to my calibre? If he meant it kindly, what right had he to think I should esteem it kindness? I daresay I deserved nothing more; but who was he to judge of my deserts? It ruffled my vanity, and destroyed any self-confidence I was beginning to feel. The worst of it was, he meant no rudeness. He did not even pretend to patronise me; he simply chose to talk upon subjects which he was pleased to think were well within my limited range. It was mortifying! I twisted up my dinner napkin under the table, as a sort of vent to my vexation. Soon I grew desperate. I would show this man I was not the inane, empty-headed school-girl he fancied me, or I would perish in the attempt. My fluency of speech came back as suddenly as it left me. On my own account, I began to talk—of topics about which I knew nothing—of places I had never visited—of people I had never seen—and of books I had never read. He seemed amused at my new departure, and, I flattered myself, tried

to lead me on to talk. So talk I did, and thought no evil. It was not until I had once or twice gone completely out of my depth, right over head and shoulders, and was compelled to flounder back as best I could, that I fancied the wretched man was laughing at me—not openly, of course; his manner was politeness itself. Yet I had an unpleasant suspicion that more than once I had made myself an idiot in his eyes. I positively detest people who have the misfortune to see me at a disadvantage; so, when I rose with the rest of the women and left the table, I felt that it would have been a great satisfaction to have given Mr Vincent Hope's broad shoulders a Parthian stab with a desert fork. I had not been a success, and, what was worse, I knew it!

It was dull work in the drawing-room. The women were strangers to me, and talked about their own and their friends' affairs, in none of which I had the slightest interest. It was very hot too. I peeped out of the window, and saw the garden looking most tempting in the light of a lovely autumnal moon. How delightful it would be if I could have one walk round it! I doubted whether it would be quite right for a young lady to walk about the garden alone and by moonlight; but the temptation was very great. After all, I have always found it much easier and often pleasanter to yield to little temptations of this kind than to resist them; so I soon gave in. Even at the risk of a cold or a scolding, I would have one, just one turn in the soft September night. I slipped from the room, covered my head and shoulders with a shawl, and stole through the library window which opened to the ground.

The change from the close atmosphere of Mr Ramsay's drawing-room was, as I predicted it would be, simply delicious. The clear sky, the full moon, and the bright stars which had tempted me out, made me feel quite poetical. I forgot all my little annoyances in the beauty of the night; I became quite cheerful and happy. The one turn round the garden, which I had pledged myself not to exceed, grew to a great many; yet I was loath to leave the enchanting scene. But duty must not be altogether neglected. With a sigh, I turned for the last time, and began to retrace my steps to the house. To my horror, as I neared it, I saw the French casements of the dining-room open, saw the flood of brilliant light which poured out, partially eclipsed as one dark body after another passed through the aperture. I realised in a moment the frightful position in which I was placed. The men were coming out to get a breath of fresh air and to smoke a cigarette before entering the drawing-room. What could I do? I was certain to be seen. By the light of the wonderful moon, everything was as clearly visible as by broad daylight. I shrank from the polite ridicule with which my nocturnal wanderings were sure to be greeted; in truth, I was now rather ashamed of the freak which had led me into such an awkward situation. I wished to extricate myself without having to make excuses and explanations, and as I shuddered at the thought of walking boldly past the knot of gentlemen, I was compelled to adopt the alternative—concealment.

On the lawn, near to me, grew one of those conical trees—a species of laurel, the foliage of which touches the ground, and leaves the centre

nearly hollow. This particular tree was so large that it formed a natural summer-house; and to enable it to fulfil its mission, an entrance had been cut through the boughs on the side farthest from the house. It was the very thing—a perfect harbour of refuge! Careless of insects, heedless of the twigs which caught and tugged at my hair, but groaning, nevertheless, as I thought of my new frock, I rushed inside, unseen and, I hoped, unheard, resolved to wait behind the friendly boughs until the voices which I heard in the distance died into silence. Feeling quite sure that no one would be likely to explore the leafy recesses of my hiding-place, I began to grow easy in my mind, and even ventured to compliment myself upon the cleverness I had displayed. My triumph was short-lived. In a few moments I became aware that voices were drawing near to me—so alarmingly near, that very soon I was able to recognise them and distinguish what they were saying. It was Mr Vincent Hope and his host, who had strolled away from their friends.

'You have a fine specimen of the Portuguese laurel here,' said the former.

'Yes,' replied Mr Ramsay. 'It's a fine tree of the kind. They seldom grow larger. Indeed, this one is beginning to die down. There is an entrance cut on the other side; so it makes a shady, but uncomfortable, warm-weather retreat.'

Then I knew that the two gentlemen were coming round to the entrance. I was in despair. I cowered down in the darkness, and prayed that Mr Hope's curiosity might not induce him to pursue his botanical researches into the interior. I saw his head and shoulders fill up the entrance and hide the moonlight falling there. For the moment, I was undecided whether to shriek with horror, to endeavour to scare him away by growling like a wild beast, or to lie still and trust to chance. On the whole, the last seemed the wisest course to adopt. I breathed more freely when I found he had no intention of entering—the recesses were not tempting at night. I hoped the two men would now remove themselves. But, alas! my imprisonment was not yet to be ended. They stood exactly in front of the entrance, and from my hiding-place I could hear every word they spoke.

#### A VISIT TO WILDEN TIN-WORKS.

I WAS driving over breezy Hartlebury Common this morning, when a bright flash of light startled my horse from his lazy jog-trot, and scattered the aerial puppets of a day-dream to the winds. It was but after all the reflection of the sunlight from a piece of tin flung carelessly from a tinker's hand; but looking at it as it lay glittering in the furze, the thought occurred to me: What a benefactor to mankind was he who invented the art of tinning iron! For tin essentially it is not, but thin sheet-iron lightly coated with the white silvery metal, as beautiful as silver itself when seen in its virgin purity; and it not only makes the iron more sightly, but more durable, while at the same time it wonderfully increases its usefulness, from the facility which its ready fusibility affords of soldering one piece to another. Nevertheless, as a protector, it is not



so perfect as it is intended to be; for that subtle force which is dazzling our eyes and bewildering our brains with its almost infinite possibilities, sadly mars its usefulness. Tin is, unfortunately, electro-positive to iron; therefore, when in contact with water, or even exposed to moist air, the iron tends to oxidise very much faster than the tinned portion, and all the faster because they are so intimately united. So long as the iron is completely covered by the tin, all goes well; but let the soft, treacherous coating be deficient or rubbed off ever so little, there is a spot of rust, which soon becomes a hole; let it be cut, and the exposed edge crumbles away in unsightly fashion, as we soon find out if our watering-pots are not kept well painted. Now, zinc has just the opposite quality—it is electro-negative to iron; and all the coating must disappear from what is called 'galvanised iron' before the iron itself succumbs. But zinc is such a dull, unseemly metal, and so readily dissolved by the weakest acids, that we can scarcely admit it into our kitchens, can hardly let it pass beyond the stables and outhouses. Imagine aught more dispiriting than the zinc door-plates one sees on the shady side of a shabby street! And yet, what can it not do when fulfilling its destiny in the cells of the galvanic battery? The poor, dull, feeble metal—semi-metal, the old chemists disparagingly called it—dissolving in its acid bath gives birth to that marvellous force which burns in the electric light with sun-like splendour, converts waxen moulds into vases or statuettes of glittering silver, drives tramway-cars, flashes telegrams swifter than light can fly, and speaks in the telephone with tremulous, almost living lips.

But, to come back to our scrap of tin. Although we use wares made from it so frequently and familiarly, there are few who can tell how it is manufactured, and still fewer are aware of the enormous and costly machinery employed in producing it. However, if the reader will follow me to the other side of the common I have been crossing just now, we may see the whole process and one of the most famous works in England.

On our way, we pass long rows of comfortable cottages which are inhabited by the workpeople, and a pretty church in the Early English style, built for them at the sole charge of Mr A. Baldwin, the owner of the works. The works cover a great space along the banks of the Stour, once a clear trout stream, but now half-canal, half-river, black and muddy, with only its impetuous rush to remind us of its birthplace amongst the sunlit hills. A thick pall of smoke half-hides the low, square chimney-shafts, lurid with the fierce fires which burn beneath and leap in flashes from their summits; behind, are others, taller, and only sullenly smoking, like half-extinct volcanoes. Over the tops of the lower shafts are tilted square iron dampers, moved by a lever and chain, and looking something like gigantic rat-traps, which the flames seem to lick with fierce enjoyment as their red tongues curl around and over them. Huge mounds of charcoal lie heaped about—so large, that whole forests must have been denuded of their undergrowth to furnish it.

We are still outside the works, looking down into them from a terrace road cut out along the steep hillside. Some ewes and lambs,

feeding on the scanty herbage, are so begrimed by smoke that they seem to be less sheep than overdone mutton. Even here the din is deafening. The continuous roar of the furnaces; the heavy, intermittent thud of ponderous hammers; the angry hiss of escaping steam; the rush of falling water; the clash of great sheets of glowing metal as they are flung momentarily on the ground; with the apparently dangerous intermingling of ponderous machinery and a crowd of hurrying men, seem to make the notice on the gates, 'No admittance,' almost unnecessary.

We enter, and, the proprietor being absent, are placed under the care of the burly 'master of the rolls'—no legal functionary, but a very important man indeed here, as the exact surfacing of the great rollers—or rolls, as the men call them—depends, as we shall see presently, upon his skilful touch. He shows us first the reverberatory furnaces, as near as the scorching heat will permit us to approach, where the already almost pure iron is puddled—that is, melted and stirred under a current of intensely heated air, which burns its carbon away—until its fusing-point rises even above the fierce heat of the white-hot charcoal, through which the blast is roaring like a tornado, and the bubbling liquid becomes a pasty mass of metal. It is then lifted out on a long iron bar, and swung to an anvil, where it is beaten by a huge tilt-hammer moved by water-power, and kneaded and banged until all impurities are crushed out of it, and, in the form of a thick rough bar, it is ready for the rollers. These rollers, which are driven by a mighty engine, are cylinders of ponderous make, weighing, if I remember rightly, twenty-five tons, whirling round swiftly but silently, and with such evidence of pitiless force that one almost shudders beside them. On its way, the rough iron is reheated to incandescence, then thrust against the rollers. It is through in a moment! and in the form of a long flat bar, which is then divided into lengths by a pair of great shears, which cut through an inch of cold iron as easily as a lady snips a playing-card. Then it is carried to a second set of furnaces, also heated with charcoal, when it is again raised to a high temperature, and passed between a series of rollers, more finely set, until it becomes a thin, ragged-edged sheet. The cylinders are here in sets of three, placed one above the other, so that the sheets are rolled away below and returned above. As each falls clashing on the ground, it is quickly doubled up lengthways by the workmen with long pincers, viciously pinched at the folds, and returned to the furnace, then rolled again, until it emerges at last in a perfectly homogeneous sheet, about two feet wide, and scarcely thicker than the paper this is printed on.

At one furnace, they are treating sheets of steel the same way—for use in a neighbouring factory, where it will be stamped into hollow tin ware without seam or joint. These sheets fall from the rollers with a thunderous clang which makes the air throb again. And what an atmosphere it is! It is difficult to breathe it, so hot, so dusty, so charged with noxious gases; yet the work goes on day and night, and a crowd of men and boys find in it an employment healthy enough.

The great sheets are now cut into squares and

trimmed, and then sent to the pickling-tub, to be cleansed from the black oxide which covers them. This tub is a large cistern lined with lead, and filled with dilute sulphuric acid, over which an immense copper cage is suspended. After the cage is packed with the plates, it is dipped down into the acid liquid, makes a few revolutions, then rises, and with a half-turn of the beam which carries it, is brought over another vat through which a stream of water is passing. The dip and spin are here repeated until all the acid is washed away, and the plates are taken out perfectly clean, but with rough, abraded surfaces. To get rid of this defect, they are passed for the last time, and without reheating, between a pair of highly polished rollers, and emerge perfectly smooth, and resembling in colour Damascus steel.

They are now ready for tinning; and on our way to the next department we pass a stack of dusty bars of that metal. 'Cost a thousand pounds,' says the master of the rolls, with a rap of his knuckles on the top one. The tin is first melted and 'polled'—that is, stirred up with a stick of green wood, which sends a current of steam through it, and sweeps some impurities to the surface; it is then transferred to square iron cisterns, where it is kept melted, with a layer of palm-oil on the surface, to prevent oxidation.

Beneath the black, seething pool, the iron plates are plunged; and when they are taken out, they seem to have been transmuted, as in the dream of the Chinese alchemist, from iron to silver, so brilliant is the coating. They are now rubbed with sawdust, to get rid of the oil, then away to be packed. But they are first subjected to a curious test. It is important that plates of the same thickness, and equally coated throughout, should be sorted together. But it would be difficult to gauge them; so a man with a good ear is seated in a comparatively quiet part of the works, and taking each sheet by the corner, gives it a dexterous shake, eliciting a *thrubbling* sound—if I may coin a word—which differs, of course, in pitch with the slightest change in thickness; and thus he sorts them.

At the end of the works is a saw-mill, where the oak-boxes are made in which the tin is packed; and whence it travels all over the world as 'Best charcoal tin.' It is acceptable among almost all nations—from Russia, where it is used for roofing houses and covering the bizarre domes of the emerald-green topped churches, to the upper waters of the Amazon, where it glitters more brightly still as the nose-plate of the festive savage, dancing, impecunious but happy, amidst the living emeralds of his forest-home.

#### THE LEGEND OF THE TWINLAW CAIRNS.

On the southern ridge of the Lammermoors, five miles from the village of Westruther, Berwickshire, stand the Twinlaw Cairns. They form one of the most noted and interesting features of the country-side. The Twinlaws, as they are familiarly termed, are two pillars of unhewn whinstone, which stand about fifty or sixty yards apart. Around the base of each, a rough circular

causeway of flat stones, unpolished by the touch of art, extends to a radius of several feet. A few miles to the westward of these monuments, and hidden all but the turrets, amid a clump of fir-trees, is the mansion of Spottiswoode; while to the east is the decayed house of Wedderlie, once the home of the Edgars, now the property of Lord Blantyre. On the plain beneath, between the rising ground and the turnpike that leads past Lauder and on to Edinburgh, the infant Blackadder trickles through fields that not long ago were marsh-land, on its journey Mersewards. In this same flat area, a ragged remnant of an ancient forest is still to be seen, straggling towards the Jordonlaw peat-moss—a bog full of treacherous pools and stagnant ditches. Still a dreary district, this was once a savage region, the haunt of wild animals, whose names have been given to farms and clachans. In the neighbourhood, one comes across such places as Wolfstruther (now Westruther), Roeleuch, Harelaw, and Hindside.

The Twinlaw Cairns are two grim memorials of a tragic and pathetic incident in Scottish tradition. Connected with them is a legend which every dweller in the district knows by heart. Though to the great herd of tourists they may be unknown, never a summer passes but they are visited by faithful pilgrims. Anglers on their way to the fishing-burns beyond, climb to the top of the pillars by means of projecting slabs, to enjoy the pure atmosphere, which is cool in hottest days, and to gaze on the surrounding scenery. From the pinnacle of the pillars, a fine prospect is to be had. Away in front of the spectator, in a direct line southward, is the imposing and massive remains of Hume Castle; and beyond it, the dim outline of the Cheviots meeting the horizon. Westward are the Eildon Hills, and the heights in the neighbourhood of Earlstoun, the ancient residence of Thomas the Rhymer. To the eastward, between the Lammermoors and the Northumbrian coast, stretches the Merse, with its farm-steadings and fair fields—a perfect garden of agriculture.

But our immediate subject is not the surrounding scenery; it is the two sombre Cairns on the brow of the Twinlaw hill. The hills have a charm all their own in the daytime; but it is only after sunset, and when viewed from the plain beneath, that the Cairns themselves are absorbing in their interest. In the gray twilight, when the silence is unbroken save by the *sough* of the wind or the solitary cry of the curlew, they loom through the thin rising mist, dim, desolate, fascinating the imagination. It is then the story that explains their presence appeals with all its force and pathos to the mind. There is not a rustic in the country-side but knows the tale. Meet a hind or a shepherd by the wayside after his work is over, and he will repeat it, as it has come to him from his fathers, with a subdued seriousness that borders on reverence. He will tell you it occurred in the time when

Scotland fought for her independence, and on a hot summer's day.

The Anglo-Saxons' restless band  
Had crossed the river Tweed,  
Up for the hills of Lammermoor  
The host marched on with speed.

The English army encamped on one side of what is now known as the Twinlaw hill. On the other side, a Scottish force, inferior in numbers, assembled, and prepared to offer resistance.

Our Scottish warriors on the heath  
In close battalion stood,  
Resolved to set their country free,  
Or shed their dearest blood.

But the fates decreed that there should be no general fight, for while both armies waited in readiness, 'an English chieftain, exulting in his might,' sent a challenge to the Scots, daring any one of them to come and meet him in single combat. Young Edgar of Wedderlie, who was in the Scottish camp, heard the challenge, and accepted it. The two champions at once commenced the duel, the armies on each side looking on. The fight was fierce—

From left to right, from right to left,  
The sweating foemen reeled.

Young Edgar was the first to be wounded. He received a 'bluidy gash' in the right side, and a moment's truce was held till the wound was stanch'd with flax. The fight was renewed, and grew more desperate, and at last it ended by Edgar slaying the Southron. Just as the struggle ceased, and when Edgar was looking on the face of his lifeless foe, an old frail man with long gray hair tottered across from the English host to the fatal place where the victorious youth stood. The old man, 'heavily pressed by sorrow,' bent over the dead champion of the Southrons, and then, looking up at Edgar, burst out into a piteous wail: 'Woe! woe is me for this deed of blood! Edgar of Wedderlie, sore will thy sorrow be. Look on the dead! Thou hast slain the son of thy father! It is thy twin-brother that lies lifeless on the heath. It is thy brother, whom I stole away in infancy from his father's hall. A man of might he was—brave and noble—and he now lies dead—slain by the hand of his twin-brother! Woe, woeful day!'

From his childhood, Edgar had known that his brother had been stolen by gypsies or soldiers; and no sooner did he hear this revelation, than he unstanched his wound, and stood calm and passionless till the blood flowed from his veins. In a few moments he sank in death by the side of his brother's body. Both armies, deeply impressed by the scene, laid down their arms and gave up all idea of battle. In the quiet of the evening, the two hosts formed into a single line, that stretched from the brow of the hill down to the valley—to the side of the Watch—

A lonely stream that sobs along,  
Like a child who has lost his way,  
Making its moan to the heartless hills  
That imprison it night and day.

From the bed of the streamlet they picked the stones, and handing them one by one along the line, built the Twinlaw Cairns by the grave of the two brothers.

Such is the legend that tells the story of these rude pillars. Since they were raised, once or twice they have been partially overthrown by the rage of the elements, but always tenderly restored. Lady John Scott of Spottiswoode takes a pride in the sacred relics, and sees that they are kept in good order. It is a lonely place, far from the roar of railway trains and fashionable resorts; but every tourist who finds himself in the neighbourhood fails not to make a pilgrimage to the Cairns

## MOLEANA.

A GARDENER in the west of Scotland writes to us as follows:

Perhaps you will allow me to supplement the very interesting article about moles which appeared in a recent number of your *Journal*. Being a gardener, I can hardly be expected to have any great liking for this curious little animal, seeing that he is a great nuisance in a flower-garden and among seed-beds and the like. I will just mention one instance, out of many, of the trouble and annoyance which he may cause. Most people know that the laying of box-edging requires a deal of labour and no little skill. Well, I have known the labour of a day destroyed in one night by a mole. In this case, the hard-working little fellow had commenced at one end of the edging and gone right to the other, sufficiently near to displace the whole, so that it had to be laid over again.

It is, however, beyond dispute that moles destroy vast numbers of wire-worm and other grubs, which are frequently most destructive to the crops of the farmer and gardener. I am therefore an advocate for allowing them to work without molestation wherever and whenever it can be done; and I do not grudge the little labour required to scatter their hills. On this principle, I allow them the full run of the kitchen-garden, whenever the crops are advanced enough to prevent their being displaced or buried.

It does not seem to be generally known that moles come out and feed upon the surface at night. Grubs of various sorts, and worms, do the same thing, and the moles come up to feed on them. Moles are very voracious, and seem to be always hungry. If one is caught unhurt and handled tenderly, it will immediately begin to eat any worms given to it. I have had one which, within a minute after being caught, took a worm from my hand. A very curious and instructive circumstance came to my knowledge a few years ago. A mole-catcher of my acquaintance found a mole's nest with young in it. The nest was made of bits of woollen cloth of different kinds, but mostly a scarlet sort of thick texture. The only place where these bits of cloth could have been got was in a field a long way off, where manure from the town had been spread, and which contained a quantity of tailors' clippings, bits of red cloth predominating. The bits of cloth which composed the nest and the bits

in the field were compared, and found to be identical. The distance from the nest to the field was not measured, but it was great enough to cause astonishment.

Cats sometimes take to mole-catching, just for the fun of the thing, I suppose, for they never try to eat them. It is doubtless also this fondness for mere sport which makes some cats hunt the timid shrew so assiduously, for they do not eat that animal either. I have little doubt that owls, for the same reason, sometimes catch moles. I am strengthened in this belief owing to my knowing that they will pounce upon and carry off more unlikely things. I knew a gardener who got his small fur skull-cap taken off his head several times by owls. When going to replenish the hothouse fires during the night, he had to pass a ruin where many owls congregated. He always got his cap next morning not far from the spot, the thief having apparently dropped it in disgust, on discovering that it was not the sort of prey expected.

## OCCASIONAL NOTES.

### THE CULTURE OF CINCHONA.

CINCHONA is the generic name for a number of trees the bark of which yields the most valuable tonic and febrifuge ever discovered. Although the western mountainous region of South America is the native home of these trees, the supply has not recently kept pace with the demand, and attempts have been made to naturalise this bark-producing tree in other countries, with more or less success. At the instance of the British government, Mr Clements Markham some years ago superintended the first shipments of the cinchona tree from South America to India. Previous to this movement, the government had been spending about thirty thousand pounds a year for quinine and bark; now it seems, so profitable has the culture become, that the original investment of one hundred and fifty thousand pounds has been repaid, and the trees have been valued at one million sterling. It requires a tropical climate and plentiful rainfall; we find it flourishing now in Java, on the Himalayas, in British Burmah, Jamaica, Trinidad, St Helena, and, since the failure of the coffee-plant, very largely in Ceylon, where there are at least seven million cinchona trees. The Jamaica bark is very highly prized, and brings a good price in the market. Besides the valuable medicine known as quinine, it yields other alkaloids, known as quinidine, chinchonidine, and chinchonine, which form a cheap substitute for quinine, and which are coming into increasing use in India. The reckless and thriftless method of cutting down the cinchona tree adopted in South America, is abandoned in most of the Indian plantations, where the bark is peeled off the growing tree in long strips; the bared portion is then covered with moss, when a new layer of bark begins to grow.

We notice that the republic of Guatemala has just arranged with a well-known Ceylon planter, Mr W. Forsyth, to select seed for five million cinchona trees. President Barrios has been induced to try this experiment, from the rapid

increase in the number of uses to which cinchona bark is put, not only for the manufacture of quinine, but also as an ingredient in the substitute for hops and for other purposes. Probably vast tracts of soil in Central America could not be utilised in a better way. A practical planter is of opinion that both coffee and cinchona would grow well on the volcanic soil of Mexico at a certain altitude; and it is expected that both Guatemala and Mexico will soon be largely engaged in its culture.

### METALLISATION OF WOOD.

This process, which has lately been invented in France, consists in soaking the wood in caustic alkali for two or three days at a temperature of from one hundred and sixty-seven to one hundred and ninety-four degrees Fahrenheit. At the expiration of this time, the wood is placed in another bath, of hydrosulphate of calcium, to which is added, after twenty-four hours, a concentrated solution of sulphur. In forty-eight hours the wood is immersed in a third bath, of acetate of lead, at a temperature of from ninety-five to one hundred and twenty-two degrees Fahrenheit, for thirty to fifty hours. When it is quite dry, it is capable of receiving a wonderful polish, and looks like a metal mirror. Wood treated in this way is practically indestructible, and never decays with damp.

### LOGIC.

#### I. *Her respectable papa's.*

'My dear, be sensible! Upon my word,  
This—for a woman even—is absurd.  
His income's not a hundred pounds, I know.  
He's not worth loving.'—'But I love him so.'

#### II. *Her mother's.*

'You silly child, he is well made and tall;  
But looks are far from being all in all.  
His social standing's low, his family's low.  
He's not worth loving.'—'And I love him so.'

#### III. *Her eternal friend's.*

'Is that he picking up the fallen fan?  
My dear! he's such an awkward, ugly man!  
You must be certain, pet, to answer "No."  
He's not worth loving.'—'And I love him so.'

#### IV. *Her brother's.*

'By Jove! I were I a girl—through horrid hap—  
I wouldn't have a milk-and-water chap.  
The man has not a single spark of "go."  
He's not worth loving.'—'Yet I love him so';

#### V. *Her own.*

And were he everything to which I've listened;  
Though he were ugly, awkward (and he isn't),  
Poor, lowly-born, and destitute of "go,"  
He is worth loving, for I love him so.'

W. M. G.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH.